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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**PSC COMPLETES GRAIN LOADOUTS AT HUMBOLDT FACILITY**

LINCOLN – The Nebraska Public Service Commission completed the disposition of grain stocks at Wilhelm Grain in Humboldt 12 days ahead of schedule.

The final truck load of corn left Humboldt at about 11 a.m. on Thursday, concluding the state's disposition of grain at the elevator which closed February 11 following the surrender of the company's state grain warehouse and grain dealer licenses by the company.

Approximate bushels of grain shipped by the Commission from Wilhelm, according to Commission records, totaled: Corn, 365,456; Oats, 4,138; Milo, 27,072; and Soybeans, 119,207.

In another action earlier in the week, the Public Service Commission issued orders determining which grain claims will be approved for payment.

Copies of the orders have been mailed to producers with claims. Only individuals with claims against the grain warehouse operation are eligible for payments. The Commission noted that no claims against the grain dealer license were approved.

"There was no evidence that the producers demanded payment within 30 days of the sale of their grain last fall," said Fifth District Commissioner Jerry Vap of McCook. As a result, no claims against a \$41,000 grain dealer bond held by Wilhelm Grain will be paid.

Claimants against the grain warehouse operation will be more successful. First District Commissioner Frank Landis of Lincoln said that a final tabulation needs to be completed of receipts and bills to be paid from the trust fund derived from the Commission's sale of grain at Wilhelm. Claims to be paid, however, will receive in excess of 90 cents on the dollar, Landis said.

Wages to persons employed by the Commission to assist with loading out of grain will be paid by the Commission's grain surveillance fund and not charged against the grain sales. Utility bills, such as the electricity needed for loading, will be paid from the trust. The trust fund also is supplemented by a grain warehouse bond of \$172,500.

Corn was the final product to be moved from Wilhelm Grain. A Beatrice cooperative was the high bidder for corn and had until the end of May to remove it to their facilities. "The quick work by the new owners of the grain will help expedite payments to producers who have valid claims," Landis said.

At a public hearing in Humboldt on April 6, the Commission's Grain Warehouse director, John Fecht, said that farmers might be paid as early as mid-summer under the best of circumstances.

"We are hoping that the cooperation we have received with this unfortunate situation will continue and we have hopes of issuing checks this summer," said Landis, who represents southeast Nebraska on the Commission.

The value of approved claims is valued on the basis of price of the grain at the warehouse on the February 11 day of closure. Commodity prices on that day were: Corn, \$1.67/bushel; Wheat, \$3.15/bushel; Milo, \$1.51/bushel; and Soybeans, \$4.96/bushel.

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